

Conscious Sedation Technique

Conscious Sedation is a technique in which intravenous drugs produce a state of depression of the brain, causing **deep relaxation**. Verbal contact is maintained and response to verbal commands is possible. Partial or total **memory loss** is normal. Duration of amnesia varies between different individuals. These drugs carry a **wide margin of safety** and anti-dotes are kept at hand. Protective reflexes are intact and the airway is protected, even when the patient drifts off to a natural sleep. A very small percentage of patients are so anxious in themselves, they do not allow their brain to “be with the fairies”. They will need referral by their dentist for treatment in hospital under general anaesthesia.

The intravenous drugs commonly used are midazolam, propofol, alfentanil, fentanyl and ketamine, with intravenous paracetamol added as painkiller, if indicated. At the very least Midazolam will be used, for the relaxation and memory loss it can provide. The other drugs may be added if indicated, but each clinical situation is assessed by Dr Chapman on own merits and with consultation with the experienced dentist who is carrying out the work.

What to expect:

At first, after checking medical history and possible allergies, a small canula is placed on the back of the hand or in the arm, through which the drugs can be administered. In the following 2-12 minutes, a deep relaxing state will set in, often with spontaneous sleep that follows. Oxygen levels, pulse and blood pressure will be monitored. The dentist might require lighter sedation during certain phases, like when the height of a filling is checked, but if more intense treatment follows, a top-up, will be given, to keep the patient comfortable. Please be assured that your safety is our number 1 priority, but there will be no holding back if more sedation is needed.

Please bring a responsible adult as chaperone along, who has only you to look after (no babies/small children), who'll arrive and stay with you, unless otherwise agreed with the practice in advance. The chaperone must be contactable at all times.

Do's and don'ts:

- Do eat and drink up to 2 hours before sedation, but consume light food that digests easily, to prevent nausea. Then **stay fasting for 2h** until we meet.
- Do **take all medication** as per usual up to 2h before.
- If you are diabetic, please do your **fasting glucose** and tell the doctor your levels and any treatment and meals you might have taken.
- Do **leave your phone** at home/with your chaperone. The sedation drugs may cloud judgement and social media is best avoided.
- Do **remove nail varnish** on at least one nail, as the sensor gives poor oxygen readings when acrylic nails or grey/ dark nail varnish is present.
- Do **avoid all recreational drugs 48h** *before* sedation, as some residual substances present in the brain might clash with sedation drugs and cause **horror** dreams thus resulting in restlessness, making treatment difficult or impossible.
- Do **disclose all allergies**, medical conditions with current medications.
- Do **empty the bladder** just prior to the sedation.
- Do **make financial transactions** regarding your treatment *before* sedation starts, as sedation renders you vulnerable, therefore we can't take it at that stage.
- **Don't drive for 24h** afterwards, as insurance is void.
- **Don't look after children** or **don't sign important documents** for 24h.
- **Don't use alcohol or sleeping tablets** on the same day as sedation.
- **Don't use public transport** home, please use a taxi/chaperone's car.

Please feel free to ask any questions regarding sedation to Dr Chapman.

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